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HENRY C. WATSON, EDITOR.

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CONTENTS.

An Ember Picture, ...	145
An Artist's Dream, ...	145
Turning Points in the Lives of Great Artists, ...	148
The Rime of the Committeeman, ...	151
Complimentary Presentation to George F. Bristow, ...	152
Terrace Garden Concerts, ...	152
"La France Musicale" and the Correspondent of the N. Y. Weekly Review, ...	152
The Weekly Review and a Local Paper, ...	153
Hector Berlioz regretting his past career, ...	154
Wohl and Poznanski at the Paris Exposition, ...	154
Musical Review, ...	154
Art Matters, ...	155
Matters Theatric, ...	156
Thoughts and Speculations, ...	156
A Pantomime in Florence, ...	156
Musical and General Gossip, ...	160

(From the Atlantic Monthly.)
AN EMBER-PICTURE.

How strange are the freaks of memory !
The lessons of life we forget,
While a trifle, a trick of color,
In the wonderful web is set,—

Set by some mordant of fancy,
And, despite the wear and tear
Of time or distance or trouble,
Insists on its right to be there.

A chance had brought us together ;
Our talk was of matters of course ;
We were nothing, one to the other,
But a short half-hour's resource.

We spoke of French acting and actors,
And their easy, natural way,—
Of the weather, for it was raining
As we drove home from the play.

We debated the social nothings
Men take such pains to discuss ;
The thunderous rumors of battle
Were silent the while for us.

Arrived at her door, we left her
With a drippingly hurried adieu,
And our wheels went crunching the gravel
Of the oak-darkened avenue.

As we drove away through the shadow,
The candle she held in the door,
From rain-varnished tree-trunk to tree-trunk
Flashed fainter, and flashed no more,—

Flashed fainter and wholly faded
Before we had passed the wood ;
But the light of the face behind it
Went with me and stayed for good.

The vision of scarce a moment,
And hardly marked at the time,
It comes unbidden to haunt me,
Like a scrap of ballad-rhyme.

Had she beauty ? Well, not what they call
so :
You may find a thousand as fair,
And yet there's her face in my memory,
With no special right to be there.

As I sit sometimes in the twilight,
And call back to life in the coals
Old faces and hopes and fancies
Long buried,—good rest to their souls !—

Her face shines out of the embers ;
I see her holding the light,
And hear the crunch of the gravel
And the sweep of the rain that night.

'T is a face that can never grow older,
That never can part from its gleam ;
'T is a gracious possession forever,
For what is it all but a dream ?

An Artist's Dream.

When I reached Kenmure's house, one August evening, it was rather a disappointment to find that he and his charming Laura had absented themselves for twenty-four hours. I had not seen them since their marriage ; my admiration for his varied genius and her unvarying grace was at its height. And I was really annoyed at the delay. My fair cousin, with her usual exact housekeeping, had prepared everything for her guest, and then bequeathed me, as she wrote, to Janet and baby Marian. It was a pleasant arrangement, for between baby Marian and me there existed a species of passion, I might almost say of betrothal, ever since that little three-year old sunbeam had blessed my mother's house by lingering awhile in it, six months before. Still I went to bed disappointed, though the delightful windows of

the chamber looked out upon the glimmering bay, and the swinging lanterns at the yardarms of the frigates shone like some softer constellation beneath the brilliant sky. The house was so close upon the water that the cool waves seemed to plash deliciously against its very basement ; and it was a comfort to think that, if there were no adequate human greetings that night, there would be plenty in the morning, since Marian would inevitably be pulling my eyelids apart before sunrise.

It seemed scarcely dawn when I was roused by a little arm round my neck, and waked to think I had one of Raphael's cherubs by my side. Fingers of waxen softness were ruthlessly at work upon my eyes, and the little form that met my touch felt lithe and elastic, like a kitten's limbs. There was just light enough to see the child, perched on the edge of the bed, her soft blue dressing-gown trailing over the white night-dress, while her black and long-fringed eyes shone through the dimness of morning. She yielded gladly to my grasp, and I could fondle again the silken hair, the velvety brunette cheek, the plump, childish shoulders. Yet sleep still half held me, and when my cherub appeared to hold it a cherubic practice to begin the day with a demand for lively anecdote, I was fain drowsily to suggest that she might first tell some stories to her doll. With the sunny readiness that was a part of her nature, she straightway turned to that young lady,—plain Susan Halliday, with both cheeks patched, and eyes of different colors,—and soon discoursed both her and me into repose.

When I waked again, it was to find the child conversing with the morningstar, which still shone through the window, scarcely so lucent as her eyes, and bidding it to go home to its mother, the sun. Another lapse into dreams, and then more vivid awakening, and she had my ear at last, and won story after story, requiting them with legends of her own youth, "almost a year ago,"—how she was perilously lost, for instance, in the small front yard, with a little playmate,

early in the afternoon, and how they came and peeped into the window, and thought all the world had forgotten them. Then the sweet voice, distinct in its articulation as Laura's, went straying off into wilder fancies, a chaos of autobiography and conjecture, like the letters of a war correspondent. You would have thought her little life had yielded more pangs and fears than might have sufficed for the discovery of the North Pole; but break-fast-time drew near at last, and Janet's honest voice was heard outside the door. I rather envied the good Scotchwoman the pleasant task of polishing the smooth cheeks, and combing the dishevelled silk; but when a little later, the small maiden was riding down stairs in my arms, I envied no one.

At sight of the bread and milk, my cherub was transformed into a hungry human child, chiefly anxious to reach the bottom of her porringer. I was with her a great deal that day. She gave no manner of trouble: it was like having the charge of a floating butterfly, endowed with warm arms to clasp, and a silvery voice to prattle. I sent Janet out to sail, with the other servants, by way of holiday, and Marian's perfect temperament was shown in the way she watched the departing.

"There they go," she said, as she stood and danced at the window. "Now they are out of sight."

"What!" I said, "are you pleased to have your friends go?"

"Yes," she answered: "but I shall be pleased-er to see them come back." Life to her was no alternation of joy and grief, but only of joy and more joyous.

'Twilight brought us to an improvised concert. Climbing the piano-stool, she went over the notes with her little taper fingers, touching the keys in a light, knowing way, that proved her a musician's child. Then I must play for her, and let the dance begin. This was a wonderful performance on her part, and consisted at first in hopping up and down on one spot, with no change of motion, but in her hands. She resembled a minute and irrepressible Shaker, or a live and beautiful *marionnette*. Then she placed Janet in the middle of the floor, and performed the dance round her, after the manner of Vivien and Merlin. Then came her supper, which like its predecessors, was a solid and absorbing meal; then one more fairy story, to magnetize her off, and she danced and sang herself up stairs. And if she first came to me in the morning with a halo round her head, she seemed still to retain it when I at last watched her kneeling in the little bed—perfectly motionless, with her hands placed together, and her long lashes sweeping her cheeks—to repeat two verses of a hymn that Janet had taught her. My nerves quivered a little when I saw that Susan Halliday had also been duly prepared for the night, and had been put in the same attitude, so far as her jointless anatomy permitted. This being ended, the doll and her mistress reposed together, and only an occasional toss of the vigorous limbs, or a stifled baby murmur would thenceforth prove, through the darkened hours, that the one figure had in it more of life than the other.

On the next morning Kenmure and Laura came back to us, and I walked down to receive them at the boat. I had forgotten how striking was their appearance, as they stood together. His broad, strong, Saxon look, his noble bearing and clear blue eyes, enhanced the fascination of her darker beauty.

America is full of the short-lived bloom and freshness of girlhood; but grace is a rarer gift, and indeed it is only a few times in life that one sees anywhere a beauty that really controls us with a permanent charm. One should remember such personal loveliness, as one recalls some particular moonlight or sunset, with a special and concentrated joy, which the multiplicity of fainter impressions cannot disturb. When in those days we used to read, in Petrarch's one hundred and twenty third sonnet, that he had once beheld on earth angelic manners and celestial charms, whose very remembrance was a delight and an affliction, since all else that he beheld seemed dream and shadow, We could easily fancy that nature had certain permanent attributes which accompanied the name of Laura.

Our Laura had that rich brunette beauty before which the mere snow and roses of the blonde must always seem wan and unimpassioned. In the superb suffusions of her cheek there seemed to flow a tide of passions and powers, which might have been tumultuous in a meaner woman, but over which, in her, the clear and brilliant eyes, and the sweet, proud mouth, presided in unbroken calm. These superb tints implied resources only, not a struggle. With this torrent from the tropics in her veins, she was the most equable person I ever saw; and had a supreme and delicate good-sense, which, if not supplying the place of genius, at least comprehended its work. Not intellectually gifted herself, perhaps, she seemed the cause of gifts in others, and furnished the atmosphere in which all showed their best. With the steady and thoughtful enthusiasm of her Puritan ancestors, she combined that grace which is so rare among their descendants,—a grace which fascinated the humblest, while it would have been just the same in the society of kings. And her person had the equipoise and symmetry of her mind. While abounding in separate points of beauty, each a source of distinct and peculiar pleasure,—as the outline of her temples, the white line that parted her night-black hair, the bend of her wrists, the moulding of her finger tips,—yet these details were lost in the overwhelming gracefulness of her presence, and the atmosphere of charm which she diffused over all human life.

A few days passed rapidly by us. We walked and rode and boated and read. Little Marian came and went, a living sunbeam, a self-sufficing thing. It was soon obvious that she was far less demonstrative towards her parents than towards me; while her mother, gracious to her as to all, yet rarely caressed her, and Kenmure, though habitually kind, seemed rather to ignore her existence, and could scarcely tolerate that she should for one instant preoccupy his wife. For Laura he lived, and she must live for him. He had a studio, which I rarely entered and Marian never, while Laura was constantly there; and after the first cordiality was passed, I observed that their daily expeditions were always arranged for two. The weather was beautiful, and they led the wildest out-door life, cruising all day or all night among the islands, regardless of hours, and, as it sometime seemed to me, of health. No matter: Kenmure liked it, and what he liked she loved. When at home, they were chiefly in the studio, he painting, modelling, poetizing perhaps, and she inseparably united with him in all. It was very beautiful, this un-

worldly and passionate love, and I could have borne to be omitted in their daily plans, since little Marian was left to me, save that it seemed so strange to omit her also. Besides, there grew to be something a little oppressive in this peculiar atmosphere; it was like living in a greenhouse.

Yet they always spoke in the simplest way of this absorbing passion, as of something about which no reticence was needed; it was too sacred *not* to be mentioned; it would be wrong not to utter freely to all the world what was doubtless the best thing the world possessed. Thus Kenmure made Laura his model in all his art; not to coin her into wealth and fame,—he would have scorned it; he would have valued fame and wealth only as instruments for proclaiming her. Looking simply at these two lovers, then, it seemed as if no human union could be more noble or stainless. Yet so far as others were concerned, it sometimes seemed to me a kind of duplex selfishness, so profound and so undisguised as to make one shudder. "Is it," I asked myself at such moments, "a great consecration or a great crime?" But something must be allowed, perhaps, for my own private dissatisfaction in Marian's behalf.

I had easily persuaded Janet to let me have a peep every night at my darling, as she slept; and once I was surprised to find Laura sitting by the small white bed. Graceful and beautiful as she always was, she never before had seemed to me so lovely, for she never had seemed quite like a mother. But I could not demand a sweeter look of tenderness than that with which she now gazed upon her child.

Little Marian lay with one brown, plump hand visible from its full white sleeve, while the other nestled half hid beneath the sheet, grasping a pair of blue morocco shoes, the last acquisition of her favorite doll. Drooping from beneath the pillow hung a handful of scarlet poppies, which the child had wished to place under her head, in the very superfluous project of putting herself to sleep thereby. Her soft brown hair was scattered on the sheet, her black lashes lay motionless upon the olive cheeks. Laura wished to move her, that I might see her the better.

"You will wake her," exclaimed I, in alarm.

"Wake this little dormouse?" Laura lightly answered. "Impossible."

And, twining her arms about her, the young mother lifted the child from the bed, three or four times, dropping her again heavily each time, while the healthy little creature remained utterly undisturbed, breathing the same quiet breath. I watched Laura with amazement: she seemed transformed.

She gayly returned my eager look, and then, seeming suddenly to penetrate its meaning, cast down her radiant eyes, while the color mounted into her cheeks. "You thought," she said, almost sternly, "that I did not love my child."

"No," I said, half untruthfully.

"I can hardly wonder," she continued, more sadly, "for it is only what I have said to myself a thousand times. Sometimes I think that I have lived in a dream, and one that few share with me. I have questioned others, and never yet found a woman who did not admit that her child was more to her, in her secret soul, than her husband. What can they mean? Such a thought is foreign to my nature."

"Why separate the two?" I asked.

"I must separate them," she answered, with the air of one driven to bay by her own self-reproaching. "I had, like other young girls, my dream of love and marriage. Unlike all the rest, I believe, my visions were fulfilled. The reality was more than the imagination; and I thought it would be so with my love for my child. The first cry of that baby told the difference to my ear. I knew it all from that moment; the bliss which had been mine as a wife would never be mine as a mother. If I had not known what it was to love my husband, I might have been content with my love for Marian. But look at that exquisite creature as she lies there asleep, and then think that I, her mother, should desert her if she were dying, for aught I know, at one word from him!"

"Your feeling is morbid," I said, hardly knowing what to answer.

"What good does it serve to know that?" she said, defiantly. "I say it to myself every day. Once when she was ill, and was given back to me in all the precious helplessness of babyhood, there was such a strange sweetness in it, I thought the charm might remain; but it vanished when she could run about once more. And she is such a healthy, self-reliant little thing," added Laura, glancing toward the bed with a momentary look of motherly pride that seemed strangely out of place amid these self-denunciations.

"I wish her to be so," she added. "The best service I can do for her is to teach her to stand alone. And at some day," continued the beautiful woman, her whole face lighting up with happiness, "she may love as I have loved."

"And your husband," I said, after a pause,—"does your feeling represent his?"

"My husband," she said, "lives for his genius, as he should. You that know him, why do you ask?"

"And his heart?" I said, half frightened at my own temerity.

"Heart?" she answered. "He loves me."

Her color mounted higher yet; she had a look of pride, almost of haughtiness. All else seemed forgotten; she had turned away from the child's little bed, as if it had no existence. It flashed upon me that something of the poison of her artificial atmosphere was reaching her already.

Kenmure's step was heard in the hall, and, with fire in her eyes, she hastened to meet him. I seemed actually to breathe freer after the departure of that enchanting woman, in danger of perishing inwardly, I said to myself, in an air too lavishly perfumed. Bending over Marian, I wondered if it were indeed possible that a perfectly healthy life had sprung from that union too intense and too absorbed. Yet I had often noticed that the child seemed to wear the temperaments of both her parents as a kind of playful disguise, and to peep at you, now out of the one, now from the other, showing that she had her own individual life behind.

As if by some infantine instinct, the darling turned in her sleep and came unconsciously nearer me. With a half-feeling of self-reproach, I drew around my neck, inch by inch, the little arms that tightened with a delicious thrill; and so I half reclined there till I myself dozed, and the watchful Janet, looking in, warned me away. Crossing the entry to my own chamber, I heard Kenmure and Laura down stairs, but I knew that I should be superfluous, and felt that I was sleepy.

I had now, indeed, become always super-

fluous when they were together, though never when they were apart. Even they must be separated sometimes, and then each sought me, in order to discourse about the other. Kenmure showed me every sketch he had ever made of Laura. There she was, in all the wonderful range of her beauty,—in clay, in cameo, in pencil, in water-color, in oils. He showed me also his poems, and, at last, a longer one, for which pencil and graver had alike been laid aside. All these he kept in a great cabinet she had brought with her to their housekeeping; and it seemed to me that he also treasured every flower she had dropped, every slender glove she had worn, every ribbon from her hair. I could not wonder. Who would not thrill at the touch of some such memorial of Mary of Scotland, or of Heloise? and what was all the regal beauty of the past to him? Every room always seemed adorned when she was in it, empty when she had gone,—save that the trace of her still seemed left on everything, and all appeared but as a garment she had worn. It seemed that even her great mirror must retain, film after film, each reflection of her least movement, the turning of her head, the ungloving of her hand. Strange! that, with all this intoxicating presence, she yet led a life so free from self, so simple, so absorbed, that all trace of consciousness was excluded, and she seemed unsophisticated as her own child.

As we were once thus employed in the studio, I asked Kenmure, abruptly, if he never shrank from the publicity he was thus giving Laura. "Madame Récamier was not quite pleased," I said, "that Canova had modelled her bust, even from imagination. Do you never shrink from permitting irreverent eyes to look on Laura's beauty? Think of men as you know them. Would you give each of them her miniature, perhaps to go with them into scenes of riot and shame?"

"Would to Heaven I could!" said he, passionately. "What else could save them, if that did not? God lets his sun shine on the evil and on the good, but the evil need it most."

There was a pause; and then I ventured to ask him a question that had been many times upon my lips unspoken.

"Does it never occur to you?" I said, "that Laura cannot live on earth forever?"

"You cannot disturb me about that," he answered, not sadly, but with a set, stern look, as if fencing for the hundredth time against an antagonist who was foredoomed to be his master in the end. "Laura will outlive me. I am so sure of it, that, every time I come near her, I pray that I may not be paralyzed, and die outside her arms. Yet, in any event, what can I do but what I am doing—devote my whole soul to the perpetuation of her beauty, through art? It is my only dream. What else is worth doing? It is for this I have tried, through sculpture, through painting, through verse, to depict her as she is. Thus far I have failed. Why have I failed? Is it because I have not lived a life sufficiently absorbed in her? or is it that there is no permitted way by which, after God has reclaimed her, the tradition of her perfect loveliness may be retained on earth?"

The blinds of the piazza doorway opened, the sweet sea air came in, the low and level rays of yellow sunset entered as softly as if the breeze were their chariot; and softer and stiller and sweeter than light or air, little Marian stood on the threshold. She had

been in the fields with Janet, who had woven for her breeze-blown hair a wreath of the wild gerardia blossoms, whose purple beauty had reminded the good Scotchwoman of her native heather. In her arms the child bore, like a little gleaner, a great sheaf of graceful golden-rod, as large as her grasp could bear. In all the artist's visions he had seen nothing so aerial, so lovely; in all his passionate portraiture of his idol, he had delineated nothing so like to her. Marian's cheeks mantled with rich and wine-like tints, her hair took a halo from the sunbeams, her lips parted over the milk-white teeth; she looked at us with her mother's eyes. I turned to Kenmure to see if he could resist the influence.

He scarcely gave her a glance. "Go, Marian," he said—not impatiently, for he was too thoroughly courteous ever to be ungracious, even to a child—but with a steady indifference that cut me with more pain than if he had struck her.

The sun dropped behind the horizon, the halo faded from the shining hair, and every ray of light from the childish face. There came in its place that deep, wondering sadness which is more pathetic than any maturer sorrow—just as a child's illness touches our hearts more than that of a man or woman, it seems so premature and so plaintive. She turned away; it was the very first time I had ever seen the little face drawn down, or the tears gathering in the eyes. By some kind providence, the mother met Marian on the piazza, herself flushed and beautiful with walking, and caught the little thing in her arms with unwonted tenderness. It was enough for the elastic child. After one moment of such bliss she could go to Janet, go anywhere; and when the same graceful presence came in to us in the studio, we also could ask no more.

We had music and moonlight, and were happy. The atmosphere seemed more human, less natural. Going up stairs at last, I looked in at the nursery, and found my pet seeming rather flushed, and I fancied that she stirred uneasily. It passed, whatever it was; for next morning she came in to wake me, looking, as usual, as if a new heaven and earth had been coined purposely for her since she went to sleep. We had our usual long and important discourse—this time tending to protracted narrative, of the Mother Goose description—until, if it had been possible for any human being to be late for breakfast in that house, we should have been the offenders. But she ultimately went down stairs on my shoulder, and, as Kenmure and Laura were out rowing, the baby put me in her own place, sat in her mother's chair, and ruled me with a rod of iron. How wonderful was the instinct by which this little creature, who so seldom heard one word of parental severity or parental fondness, yet knew so thoroughly the language of both! Had I been the most depraved of children, or the most angelic, I could not have been more sternly excluded from the sugar-bowl, or more overwhelmed with compensating kisses.

Later on that day, while little Marian was taking the very profoundest nap that ever a baby was blessed with, (she had a pretty way of dropping asleep in unexpected corners of the house, like a kitten,) I somehow strayed into a confidential talk with Janet about her mistress. I was rather troubled to find that all her loyalty was for Laura, with nothing left for Kenmure, whom indeed she seemed to regard as a sort of objectionable altar, on which her darlings were being sacrificed.

When she came to particulars, certain stray fears of my own were confirmed. It seemed that Laura's constitution was not fit, Janet averred, to bear these irregular hours, early and late; and she plainly dwelt on the untasted oatmeal in the morning, the insufficient luncheon, the precarious dinner, the excessive walking, the evening damps. There was coming to be a look about her such as her mother had, who died at thirty. As for Marian—but here the complaint suddenly stopped; it would have required far stronger revocation to extract from the faithful soul one word that might seem to reflect on Laura.

Another year, and her forebodings had come true. It is needless to dwell on the interval. Since then I have sometimes felt a regret almost insatiable, in the thought that I should have been absent while all that gracious beauty seemed fading and dissolving like a cloud; and yet at other times it has appeared a relief to think that Laura would ever remain to me in the fullness of her beauty, not a tint faded, not a lineament changed. With all my efforts, I arrived only in time to accompany Kenmure home at night, after the funeral service. We paused at the door of the empty house—how empty! I hesitated, but Kenmure motioned to me to follow him in.

We passed through the hall and went upstairs. Janet met us at the head of the stairway, and asked me if I would go in to look at little Marian, who was sleeping. I begged Kenmure to go also, but he refused, almost savagely, and went on, with heavy step, to Laura's deserted room.

Almost the moment I entered the child's chamber, she waked up suddenly, looked at me, and said, "I know you, you are my friend." She never would call me her cousin. I was always her friend. Then she sat up in bed, with her eyes wide open, and said, as if stating a problem which had been put by for my solution, "I should like to see my mother."

How our hearts are rent by the unquestioning faith of children, when they come to test the love which has so often worked what seemed to them miracles—and ask of it miracles indeed! I tried to explain to her the continued existence of her beautiful mother, and she listened to it as if her eyes drank in all that I could say, and more. But the apparent distance between earth and heaven baffled her infant mind, as it often and so sadly baffles the thoughts of us elders. I wondered what precise change seemed to her to have taken place. This all-fascinating Laura, whom she adored, and who had yet never been to her what other women are to their darlings—did heaven seem to put her farther off, or bring her more near? I could never know. The healthy child had no morbid questionings; and as she had come into the world to be a sunbeam, she must not fail of that mission. She was kicking about the bed, by this time, in her nightgown, and holding her pink little toes in all sorts of difficult attitudes, when she suddenly said, looking me full in the face: "If my mother was so high up that she had her feet upon a star, do you think that I could see her?"

This astronomical apotheosis startled me for a moment, but I said unhesitatingly, "Yes," feeling sure that the lustrous eyes that looked in mine could certainly see as far as Dante's, when Beatrice was transferred from his side to the highest realm of Paradise. I put my head beside hers upon the

pillow, and stayed till I thought she was asleep.

I then followed Kenmure into Laura's chamber. It was dusk, but the after-sunset glow still bathed the room with imperfect light, and he lay upon the bed, his hands clenched over his eyes.

There was a deep bow-window where Laura used to sit and watch us, sometimes, when we put off in the boat. Her æolian harp was in the casement, breaking its heart in music. A delicate handkerchief was lodged between the cushions of the window-seat,—the very handkerchief she used to wave, in summer days long gone. The white boats went sailing beneath the evening light, children shouted and splashed in the water, a song came from a yacht, a steam-whistle shrilled from the receding steamer; but she for whom alone those little signs of life had been dear and precious would henceforth be as invisible to our eyes as if time and space had never held her; and the young moon and the evening star seemed but empty things, unless they could pilot us to some world where the splendor of her loveliness could match their own.

Twilight faded, evening darkened, and still Kenmure lay motionless, until his strong form grew in moody fancy to be like some carving of Michel Angelo, more than like a living man. And when he at last startled me by speaking, it was with a voice so far off and so strange, it might almost have come wandering down from the century when Michel Angelo lived.

"You are right," he said. "I have been living in a dream. It has all vanished. I have kept no memorial of her presence, nothing to perpetuate the most beautiful of lives."

Before I could answer, the door came softly open, and there stood in the doorway a small white figure, holding aloft a lighted taper of pure alabaster. It was Marian in her little nightdress, with the loose, blue wrapper trailing behind her, let go in the effort to hold carefully the doll, Susan Halliday, robed also for the night.

"May I come in?" said the child. Kenmure was motionless at first, then, looking over his shoulder, said merely "What?"

"Janet said," continued Marian, in her clear and methodical way; "that my mother was up in heaven, and would help God hear my prayers at any rate; but if I pleased, I could come and say them by you."

A shudder passed over Kenmure; then he turned away, and put his hands over his eyes. She waited for no answer, but, putting down the candlestick, in her own wonted careful manner, upon a chair, she began to climb upon the bed, lifting laboriously one little rosy foot, then another, still dragging after her, with great effort, the doll. Nestling at her father's breast, I saw her kneel.

"Once mother put her arm around me, when I said my prayers." She made this remark, under her breath, less as a suggestion, it seemed, than as the simple statement of a fact.

Instantly I saw Kenmure's arm move, and grasping her with that strong and gentle touch of his that I had so often noticed in the studio,—a touch that seemed quiet as the approach of fate, and as resistless. I knew him well enough to understand that iron adoption.

He drew her toward him, her soft hair was on his breast, she looked fearlessly in his

eyes, and I could hear the little prayer proceeding, yet in so low a whisper that I could not catch one word. She was infinitely solemn at such times, the darling; and there was always something in her low, clear tone, through all her prayings and philosophizings, which was strangely like her mother's voice. Sometimes she seemed to stop and ask a question, and at every answer I could see her father's arm tighten, and the iron girdle grow more close.

The moments passed, the voices grew lower yet, the doll slid to the ground. Marian had drifted away upon a vaster ocean than that whose music lulled her from without,—upon that sea whose waves are dreams. The night was wearing on, the lights gleamed from the anchored vessels, the bay rippled serenely against the low sea-wall, the breeze blew gently in. Marian's baby breathing grew deeper and more tranquil; and as all the sorrows of the weary earth might be imagined to exhale themselves in spring through the breath of violets, so it seemed as if it might be with Kenmure's burdened heart. By degrees the strong man's deeper respirations mingled with those of the child, and their two separate beings seemed merged and solved into identity, as they slumbered, breast to breast, beneath the golden and quiet stars. I passed by without awakening them; I knew the artist had attained his dream.—*Atlantic Monthly.*

TURNING POINTS IN THE LIVES OF GREAT ARTISTS.

No. 1.—FLAXMAN AND THE GOLD MEDAL.

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INTRODUCTION.

John Flaxman, one of the greatest sculptors England has produced, was the son of a poor plaster-figure maker, and was born in York, 1755. Taken notice of as a poor, clever, invalid boy, of great promise, and with a taste for Art, by the Rev. Mr. Mathew—as Nollekens Smith, that most delightful of all antiquarian Art-gossipers, tells us—he was encouraged to make designs from Homer, and from Greek plays. His first statue was an "Alexander the Great," executed for a Mr. Knight, in Portland Place. After his marriage with Miss Denman, in 1782, the young sculptor left his humble home in Wardour Street, and went to Rome to study, incited, it is said, by that incorrigible old bachelor, Sir Joshua Reynolds, warning him that when an artist once married, he relinquished study, and betook himself to manufacture and money-making—a bitter remark, but true, if taken with a grain or two of restrictive salt.

The present scene is intended to depict the conceit and arrogance of Flaxman's early youth. On a certain occasion (1781), when he competed with one Engleheart, for the Academy's gold medal, he lost it entirely by his intolerable self-confidence, and the dangerous contempt he foolishly entertained of